

**From:** schaffer, joan [schafer.joan@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 12/4/2018 3:51:01 PM  
**To:** Servidio, Cosmo [Servidio.Cosmo@epa.gov]; Rodrigues, Cecil [rodrigues.cecil@epa.gov]; Fields, Jenifer [fields.jenifer@epa.gov]; Esher, Diana [Esher.Diana@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** FW: EPA Mid-Atlantic Region Headlines - Tuesday, December 4, 2018

## New hydrogen plant coming to Delaware City Refinery

**DELAWARE PUBLIC MEDIA** PBF Energy and its partner The Linde Group recently broke ground on a hydrogen plant at the Delaware City Refinery. The plant will help the refinery convert more crude oil products into higher quality fuels. The plant, a Methane Steam Reforming facility, will produce hydrogen from natural gas. The refinery will use that hydrogen to remove sulfur from the crude products left behind in other refining processes. The Linde Group, which has an industrial gases plant in Claymont, will build, own and operate the new hydrogen plant at the Delaware City Refinery. "The hydrogen is going to be used to convert some of their heavy feedstock that they process at the refinery to very clean fuels," said Dr. Raghu Menon, Vice President of Onsite Investment Projects for Linde Americas. Menon says the more than \$100-million project will create seven permanent, high-skilled jobs with Linde. He says Linde Gas owns and operates over sixty steam reforming-based hydrogen plants worldwide... Tom Nimbley, PBF Energy Chairman and CEO, said in a statement that the new hydrogen plant will expand the Delaware City Refinery's ability to produce marine fuels that meet this standard. Linde's Menon says the 25 million standard cubic feet per day hydrogen plant at the Delaware City Refinery will have Selective-Catalytic Reduction technology to reduce emissions. The Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control's Division of Air Quality permitted the project for a reformer, a cooling tower, and a flare. The permits set emissions limitations for nitrogen oxide, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, PM10, PM2.5, sulfuric acid, volatile organic compounds, ammonia and carbon dioxide equivalent. A spokesperson for the state environmental agency says DNREC's monitoring at the Delaware City Refinery is not expected to change once the hydrogen plant is operational. According to DNREC, the Delaware City monitoring station measures sulfur dioxide and PM2.5. PM2.5 is small particulate matter that is unhealthy to inhale.

## Farmers, preservation groups, Turkey Hill to get \$6.5 million in water quality projects

**LANCASTER NEWSPAPERS** Water-quality projects aimed at Lancaster County farmers, dairy producers and even faith-based groups were handed out Monday in Lancaster as part of the Chesapeake Bay cleanup. With matching money, aid given out for projects for work in Lancaster County totals almost \$6.5 million. These projects received funding:

- Turkey Hill Clean Water Partnership, \$1 million with \$1 million matching funds. Turkey Hill Dairy is requiring its producers of dairy products to have conservation plans in place as part of new contracts. Working with the Maryland and Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative, the grant money will be used to assist farmers in preparing the plans.
- Chesapeake Bay Foundation, \$850,000 with \$850,000 matching funds. The project will promote rotational grazing of fields in Lancaster and five other counties. The goal is to get 30 farms to transition to grazing their livestock as opposed to growing feed in fields, resulting in a reduction of 82,000 pounds of nitrogen, 7,000 pounds of phosphorus and 656 tons of sediment.
- Lancaster Farmland Trust, \$198,463 with \$520,000 in matching funds. The group is working specifically with Plain sect farmers to put in place sustainable farm methods that are increasingly demanded by consumers. -- One Water Partnership, \$1 million with \$1 million in matching funds. The project's goal is to get 36 congregations in Pennsylvania and Maryland to install green infrastructure measures on their properties.

Grants were handed out Monday at the Cork Factory Hotel at the biennial Chesapeake Ag Forum, a conference that brought together about 150 officials and partners advancing agricultural conservation practices across the bay watershed. Among those attending were U.S. Sen. Bob Casey and U.S. Rep. Lloyd Smucker. The grant money comes from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the state-federal Chesapeake

## Virginia conservationists blast approval of seismic testing for oil, gas in Atlantic

**NEWPORT NEWS DAILY PRESS** Virginia conservationists are blasting the Trump administration's decision to reverse course and approve seismic air gun surveys along the Atlantic coast to search for buried oil and gas reserves. The groups cite widespread public opposition to seismic blasting and offshore drilling, as well as the harm posed to marine life and coastal economies that rely on healthy waters and wetlands. "This action flies in the face of massive opposition to offshore drilling and exploration from over 90 percent of coastal municipalities in the proposed blast zone," said Diane Hoskins, campaign director at the D.C.-based advocacy group Oceana. "President (Donald) Trump is essentially giving these companies permission to harass, harm and possibly even kill marine life." "Offshore drilling in our region would pose far too many risks to the health of coastal waters and the Chesapeake Bay, fishing, aquaculture, tourism and all jobs that depend on clean water," said Lisa Feldt, vice president for environmental protection and restoration at the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. "We need to run away from offshore drilling, not move towards it." Michael Town, executive director of the Virginia League of Conservation Voters, said his members "condemn the Trump administration's tone-deaf push forward in the search for oil we don't need." And at the Southern Environmental Law Center, headquartered in Charlottesville, senior attorney Catherine Wannamaker said "communities up and down the coast have made clear they do not support seismic blasting in the Atlantic, and they will continue to fight the Trump administration turning its back on them."...

## Boil-water advisory in part of Bucks has been lifted

**PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER** Residents of Yardley, Lower Makefield, and Falls are being notified this morning via Pennsylvania American Water Company's CodeRED emergency notification system that the boil-water advisory that had been in effect since Thursday is now over. "Pennsylvania American Water customers in Yardley Borough, Lower Makefield Township, and parts of Falls Township no longer have to boil their water before use," the company said in a 7 a.m. update on its website Tuesday. "Acceptable test results were obtained from samples collected on December 2, and December 3, and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection has authorized lifting the advisory." Customers were advised to flush their pipes by running all cold-water faucets for at least five minutes simultaneously. The company also issued these additional guidelines...

## Congress Set to Pass Two-Week Stopgap Measure This Week to Avoid Partial Shutdown

**GOVERNMENT EXECUTIVE** Federal agencies appear likely to receive stopgap funding at the end of the week, with lawmakers and the White House signaling they need more time to avoid a partial government shutdown. Negotiations over full year funding for fiscal 2019 were stalled by the death of President George H.W. Bush, whose casket will be held at the Capitol from Monday evening until his funeral on Wednesday. Lawmakers agreed to a two-week continuing resolution to expire Dec. 21, according to multiple aides, with the House set to approve the measure this week by unanimous consent. Trump, who had taken a hard line over the spending to demand it include \$5 billion for his proposed wall along the U.S.-Mexico border, said over the weekend he would likely sign a stopgap bill. "If [lawmakers] come—which they have—to talk about an extension because of President Bush's passing, I would absolutely consider it and probably give it," Trump said while traveling on Air Force One...

## Clean Air Act Revamp, Climate Part of George H.W. Bush's Legacy

**BLOOMBERG ENVIRONMENT** George H.W. Bush was the first president to sign the U.S. onto a global climate deal, a modest effort recognizing the threat of climate change, and possibly the last to successfully take on a wholesale revision of the Clean Air Act. His administration at times pushed back against what it viewed as overly costly environmental regulations. But the 41st president—who cut his teeth in Texas' oil industry—left what some admirers see as an impressive legacy of environmental laws. They include the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, which used a

then-cutting edge approach of emissions trading to cut air pollutants linked to acid rain; and the Global Change Research Act of 1990, which set up a climate change research program across 13 federal agencies and departments. “We all know that human activities are changing the atmosphere in unexpected and in unprecedented ways,” Bush said in a February 1990 speech. Bush died Nov. 30 at age 94. Bush’s legislative record also included signing the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, which set up a system for assigning liability for oil spills in the wake of the Exxon Valdez oil spill. He also campaigned in 1988 on a no-net-loss of wetlands platform, though many conservation groups said it fell short of the dramatic action needed to stem environmental damage from encroaching development...

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## PENNSYLVANIA

### **PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER**

Delaware County pipeline study finds risk less than fatal car crash, house fire A long-awaited study of two pipelines planned for Delaware County found that the risk they present to residents is in line with those of other common hazards. The report by G2 Integrated Solutions found that residents living directly adjacent to pipelines are 20 times more likely to die in a traffic accident than to be killed by a rupture of the Mariner East 2 pipeline, or 27 times more likely than to be killed by the Adelphia Gateway pipeline. Fatal house fires and falls down the stairs are also more likely than deaths from the pipelines, according to the study. Mariner East 2 is part of Sunoco Logistics' \$5.1 billion effort to transport natural gas liquids from Western Pennsylvania to the Marcus Hook refinery, and is expected to be fully installed and in operation in the coming months. Adelphia Gateway LLC's eponymous line is already installed in the county — the project would repurpose a hybrid oil/natural gas pipeline to ferry natural gas liquids from Northampton County to Marcus Hook. The full results of the study will be presented by analysts from G2 at a hearing organized by the County Council. No date has been set, but officials estimate it will convene sometime in the next few weeks...

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### **PHILLYVOICE.COM**

Study links PFOA and PFOS to lower sperm counts and smaller penis size The chemicals have been reported in groundwater in some communities in Bucks, Montgomery counties. As a society, we know to fear chemicals — whether they’re sprayed on food or used to manufacture cleaning products — for their harmful properties, but a new study suggests that there’s another reason to avoid certain chemicals: They can impair male reproductive health. The study, published by the Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism, found that young men exposed to toxic chemicals PFOA (perfluorooctanoic acid) and PFOS (perfluorooctanesulfonic acid) — often found in nonstick cooking pans, firefighting foam and waterproof products — have a range of problems with their reproductive systems. The study also explains how the chemicals interfere with hormones inside the cell. The research was conducted in Veneto, Italy, a major area affected by industrial use of PFAS which has caused drinking water contamination and led to the chemicals accumulating in people’s blood, The Intercept reported. Closer to home, residents who live near the former Naval Air Warfare Center in Warminster and the former Willow Grove Naval Air Station in Horsham are beginning to clamor regarding the effect of PFOA/PFOS contamination in their ground wells. Firefighting chemicals used at the military bases for decades have infiltrated groundwater. The problem has been seen near military installations nationwide, and a number of communities closed their drinking water supplies in 2016. A number of local wells have been closed in recent years in neighborhoods around the former Navy facilities, which are less than 4 miles apart...

## **PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE REVIEW**

Citizen group challenges validity of Murrysville's fracking ordinance The Murrysville Watch Committee challenged the validity of Murrysville's fracking ordinance last week before the municipality's zoning hearing board. On the other side of the table, multiple attorneys for the municipality, landowners who support fracking and a regional driller explained why the ordinance should be left as-is. "This ordinance was not drafted to serve the interests of Murrysville residents," said John Smith, a Pittsburgh attorney representing the Murrysville Watch Committee, who are challenging the validity of the unconventional gas ordinance municipal officials approved in May 2017. "It was not done to ensure the public's health, safety and welfare. It was done so that Murrysville wouldn't get sued by the drillers." In developing the ordinance, Murrysville officials created an overlay district where drilling could take place. It was superimposed atop existing rural-residential-zoned land and encompasses a little more than a third of the municipality, although that number shrinks to 6 percent after accounting for setbacks and other restrictions. Smith's argument centered on drilling as an industrial activity, questioning why it would be permitted anywhere in a rural-residential district. "Apartments are not permitted in a rural-residential district ... a senior nursing-care home is not permitted," Smith said. "So a driller couldn't have an apartment there, but could have an industrial drill rig." Bernie Matthews, an attorney representing several Murrysville landowners who support fracking, pointed to the *Frederick v. Allegheny Township* case, in which the state's Commonwealth Court ruled 5-2 to deny an appeal by Allegheny Township property owners...

Westmoreland Transit To Roll Out 2 New Natural Gas-Powered Buses Westmoreland County transit riders will finally have the opportunity to travel on brand new buses starting Tuesday, when two of the authority's five natural gas-powered vehicles will be put into service on local routes, officials said. "Our smaller vehicles we are currently using for our local routes have definitely passed their useful life. We're eager to take some of those out of service and get the new buses on the road," authority Operations Manager Meghan Yuhouse said. Five 33-seat, handicapped-accessible vehicles were delivered to the authority in September. It took more than two months to get final registration documents from Harrisburg and to ensure drivers knew how to properly operate the new vehicles, Yuhouse said. Further delays resulted as authority officials worked to ensure that the new, larger buses could operate on specific routes, specifically that they were able to negotiate turns and clear overpasses. The authority's Route 6 through Irwin and Route 8 in New Stanton will operate with the first new buses. New buses are also earmarked for Route 5 in Jeannette, Route 9 in Latrobe and Route 14 in New Kensington. Those are expected to be put into service before year's end, Yuhouse said. The authority also ordered 11 new, smaller natural-gas fueled vehicles that will be also be targeted for its local service. Those are scheduled for delivery early next year. Six new commuter buses for the authority's routes into Pittsburgh went into service this year. The new buses are part of a \$3.5 million overhaul of the authority's fleet of 40 vehicles assigned to its fixed-route service. The authority is converting its diesel fleet to natural gas power that will be serviced at its Hempfield maintenance facility, which was upgraded last year to include a natural gas filling depot.

## **STATE IMPACT PENNSYLVANIA**

US Steel claims air pollution order could cost it \$400 million Attorneys for US Steel say Allegheny County regulators issued an unreasonably harsh enforcement order over air pollution violations at its Clairton Coke Works, and claim the order could cost the company up to \$400 million dollars to comply. They made the claim at a Monday hearing for an appeal the company filed over a June enforcement order from the Allegheny County Health Department. The order was for violations at the company's Clairton Coke Works, about 20 miles southeast of Pittsburgh. In the order, the county fined the company \$1 million for chronic violations. It said in the order the plant continued "to experience ever-increasing visible emissions and unexplained exceedance." The agency also said US Steel employees tried to mask air violations. A key aspect of the order was a stipulation the company produce a plan to comply with its air quality permits, including an inventory of all potential pollution sources and how it will address them. If the plant failed to curb emissions from its 10 coke batteries, the agency said it would order the plant to put its two worst-performing coke batteries on "hot idle" until the plant improved its performance. Mark Dausch, an attorney for US Steel, said at the hearing that putting portions of the plant on 'hot idle'—in which its ovens are kept heated but do not process coke—could damage the company's equipment through "thermal stress." "The enforcement could cost tens to hundreds of millions of dollars and result in people losing their jobs," he said. "In the worst case scenario," he said, it could cost the company \$400 million. County officials pointed out that portions of the plant were put on hot idle during 2009, without apparent damage...

Pennsylvania's top fiscal watchdog to look at state response to climate change State Auditor General Eugene DePasquale is planning a special report examining Pennsylvania's response to climate change. At a news conference Monday at the

state Capitol, DePasquale, a Democrat, said, "The longer we wait, the more expensive and perhaps even more extreme the fix may be." A 2008 state law known as Pennsylvania's Climate Change Act requires the Department of Environmental Protection to publish reports every three years, outlining the impacts of climate change and a state action plan. DePasquale was vague about how his effort will differ from the work already underway, saying only, "We're certainly going to be looking at this in a comprehensive way." He also intends to hold three hearings on climate change in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and State College. He expects to be finished sometime in the summer. A draft version of Pennsylvania's newest Climate Action Plan was published last month. DEP is scheduled to discuss it with its Climate Change Advisory Committee on Tuesday. It calls for an 80 percent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, from 2005 levels. The report also says annual precipitation in the state has increased by approximately 10 percent since the early 20th century, and is expected to increase by another 8 percent by 2050. It outlines 19 strategies for addressing climate change, including promoting clean energy, energy efficiency, monitoring ecosystems vulnerabilities, and providing resources to help farmers and the outdoor tourism industry adapt. According to DEP, climate-related risks to Pennsylvanians include frequent extreme weather events, injury and death from those extreme weather events, threats to human health through air pollution, diminished water quality, and heat stress. The warming will also affect farmers as it presents changing pest, weed, and disease management challenges...

### **BUCKS COUNTY COURIER TIMES**

PA American Water: System glitch led to Yardley area turbidity spike The PA American Water Company enlisted experts to diagnose and correct an error with the automated system that controls machinery and processes at the company's Yardley treatment facility, a representative said. That error resulted in a turbidity spike Thursday in drinking water servicing customers in Lower Makefield, Yardley and parts of Falls. Though a boil water advisory is still in effect in the Yardley area, the PA American Water Company believes it has straightened out the mechanical control issues officials said caused the problem. The company issued the advisory Thursday evening to its customers in Lower Makefield, Yardley and parts of Falls, after water samples that day showed turbidity, or cloudiness, in excess of regulatory standards. That water could have had contamination from organisms like bacteria, viruses and parasites, as well as runoff from agricultural or industrial sites, potentially resulting in nausea, cramps and diarrhea, among other symptoms, for drinkers. Terry Maenza, the company's communications director, said Thursday samples showed the water underwent a temporary spike in turbidity before returning to regular levels. Had the turbidity continued over a longer period of time and the facility's automated system — what Maenza described as the "brains" controlling the plant's machinery and processes — detected an issue, it could have shut the plant down. But it was an error with the automated system, and not machinery at the company's treatment plant off Edgewood Road in Lower Makefield, that resulted in the higher turbidity, Maenza said. PA American Water's facility draws water primarily from the Delaware River, supplemented by groundwater wells, and can produce millions of gallons of water per day. After water is pumped into the facility, sediment and particles are first clumped together using a magnet-like coagulant chemical, allowing them to be easily removed. The water then is filtered through layers of carbon, sand and gravel to filter out finer matter, including microorganisms, and lastly disinfected with chlorine before it is ready for distribution to the community. The turbidity was detected Thursday while the water was exiting the filters, Maenza said. He said he could not say specifically how the system error inhibited the facility from properly removing contaminants from the water but that PA American Water brought in experts to diagnose and correct what went wrong with the "complicated computerized system." The company previously said the temporary spike had resulted from changes in water flows to the plant's filters...

### **HARRISBURG PATRIOT NEWS**

Project to limit harmful run-off from Turkey Hill supplier farms gets big financial boost A new initiative aimed at paying farmers to help with Chesapeake Bay watershed health got a major financial boost Monday. The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay was awarded \$1 million in support of its Turkey Hill Clean Water Partnership, through which the Lancaster-based dairy has committed to paying its dairymen a bonus for their milk if they take steps to reduce sediment and nutrient off-flow from their farms. Combined with \$1.1 million in matching funds, the program now has \$2.1 million to apply to conservation planning and best-practice implementation at about 100 farms that supply milk to the Conestoga-based producer. Farms can harm water quality or aquatic ecosystems in two ways: heavy nitrogen and phosphorus concentrations from manure or chemical fertilizers spread on fields; and sediment entering streams from the frequent tilling of farm fields. The program was launched earlier this year, the Alliance noted, when as part of its

2018 contract with the cooperative representing the farmers, Turkey Hill asked that all develop a conservation plan and take on-the-ground steps to comply with it. Once all of the suppliers are in compliance, the processor would pay the farmers a premium for their milk. The grant was one of the largest in a \$13.1 million allocation from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund announced at ceremonies in Lancaster supporting 49 different water-quality initiatives in the six-state Chesapeake watershed. Another grant announced Monday, \$198,463 to the Lancaster Farmland Trust, will help support its program aimed at increasing the adoption of farm conservation practices through the engagement of Amish and other plain sect community leaders, including the establishment of "learning farms."

### **WITF HARRISBURG'S NPR STATION**

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### **LANCASTER NEWSPAPERS**

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- Grants were handed out Monday at the Cork Factory Hotel at the biennial Chesapeake Ag Forum, a conference that brought together about 150 officials and partners advancing agricultural conservation practices across the bay watershed. Among those attending were U.S. Sen. Bob Casey and U.S. Rep. Lloyd Smucker. The grant money comes from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the state-federal Chesapeake Bay Program.

### **STATE COLLEGE CENTRE DAILY TIMES**

Here's What Made 2018 Wettest Year On Record In State College Area After a rain-filled weekend, 2018 is now the wettest year on record for the State College area. The most recent count from AccuWeather on Monday evening has the annual precipitation at 59.86 inches, surpassing the previous record of 59.30, set in 1996, with a month left to go...

## **WILKES-BARRE CITIZENS VOICE**

Editorial: Vote For Lackawanna River Of The Year For Rebirth

### **PA ENVIRONMENT DIGEST BLOG (By PA DEP)**

NFWF Announces \$13.1 Million In Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund Grants, Including PA On December 3, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced more than \$13.1 million in grants to support the restoration and conservation of the Chesapeake Bay watershed in six U.S. states and the District of Columbia. The 49 grants will generate nearly \$21.9 million in matching contributions for a total conservation impact of nearly \$35 million.

Among this year's Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund grant recipients in Pennsylvania are:

- Lancaster Farmland Trust (\$198,463) will reduce pollution flowing from Salisbury Township farms to the Chesapeake Bay by catalyzing increased adoption of farm conservation practices through connecting the economic value of conservation to farm resilience and other methods including creating learning farms.
- Capital Resource Conservation and Development Area Council, Inc. (\$194,431) will support the adoption of rotational grazing and cover cropping on many livestock farms and work closely with six to 10 farms to support their transition to managed grazing.
- Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay (\$1,000,000) will support dairy farmers in meeting their sediment and nutrient reduction needs through a collaborative public-private partnership between the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, Turkey Hill Dairy, and the Maryland and Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative Association...

Auditor General DePasquale Announces Plans For Special Report On Climate Change In PA On December 3, Auditor General Eugene DePasquale announced plans to prepare a special report exploring how Pennsylvania is responding to climate change in light of a failure by national leaders to recognize and act on the issue. DePasquale said his report will focus on state government's response to climate change and steps that can better prepare the state for the future, noting that the problem will impact communities of all sizes. "Beyond the obvious public safety concerns related to flooding and infrastructure damage, a changing climate will impact health, transportation, agriculture, forestry, tourism – from farms to cities, a whole host of issues," DePasquale said. "These factors all have the potential to create new burdens on taxpayers and disrupt our economy."...

### **MARKET WATCH**

DEP Blog: Healthy Waters, Healthy Communities: Lancaster County's Watershed Planning "Our residents have a strength and determination to succeed." All or part of 43 Pennsylvania counties are in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Across these counties, community residents are working hard to reduce nitrogen and sediment pollution levels in streams and rivers. They're coming together to hammer out a plan they'll submit to DEP called a Phase 3 Watershed Implementation Plan—or Phase 3 WIP, for short—that specifies pollution-reducing actions they'll take. These Pennsylvanians are helping their communities in a big way. They're also helping the state meet federal requirements for water quality in the Bay. "Planning" seems inadequate to describe their endeavor, which requires great teamwork, vision, and passion for community, as well as skill in case-making, numbers-crunching, and logistics-nailing. So, as they strive for healthy local waters, we're inviting them to share a bit about their efforts in a series of posts we call "Healthy Waters, Healthy Communities: Watershed Planning."...

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Announces More Than \$13.1 Million in Grants from the Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund LANCASTER, Pa., Dec 03, 2018 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE via COMTEX) -- LANCASTER, Pa., Dec. 03, 2018 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today announced more than \$13.1 million in grants to support the restoration and conservation of the Chesapeake Bay watershed in six U.S. states and the District of Columbia. The 49 grants will generate nearly \$21.9 million in matching contributions for a total conservation impact of nearly \$35 million. The grants were awarded through the Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund (CBSF), a partnership between NFWF and the EPA's Innovative Nutrient and Sediment Reduction Grants Program (INSR Program) and Small Watershed Grants Program (SWG Program). Additional support is provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Altria Group Restoring America's Resources partnership and CSX. Grant recipients were announced at the Cork Factory Hotel in downtown Lancaster in conjunction with the NFWF-hosted, biennial Chesapeake Ag Forum, a conference that brings together the best practitioners and partners advancing

agricultural conservation practices across the Chesapeake Bay watershed. "The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania plays a significant role in the health of the Chesapeake Bay watershed," said Senator Bob Casey. "But more importantly, actions taken in Pennsylvania to improve the Bay begin with efforts to restore clean water to the Conestoga, the Susquehanna, and the thousands of miles of rivers and streams right here in the Commonwealth. Financial resources, beginning with our Federal agency partners like the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, are critical to these ongoing collaborative local efforts." The projects supported by the 49 grants announced today will support methods to improve waterways, restore habitat and strengthen iconic species in Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia. The funds will engage farmers and agricultural producers, homeowners, churches, businesses and municipalities in on-the-ground restoration that supports quality of life in their communities, improving local waterways and, ultimately, the health of the Bay. "EPA is pleased to support innovative and sustainable approaches to improving the health of our rivers and streams," said EPA Regional Administrator Cosmo Servidio. "These investments in partnerships with states and local organizations encourage community stewardship of resources that will help preserve and enhance healthy waterways throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed." ...

### **ASSOCIATED PRESS (Pa.)**

Chesapeake Bay cleanup efforts get a boost in funding (Norfolk, Va.) -- Efforts to clean up the Chesapeake Bay, including in Pennsylvania, will soon get a boost in funding. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Environmental Protection Agency say more than \$13 million in grants are being awarded to bay restoration and conservation programs. The health of the nation's largest estuary is improving after decades of poor health caused by pollution. But the bay still faces challenges when it comes to preventing manure and storm water from flowing into the watershed. Some of the projects supported by the grants will focus on helping farmers and towns to continue to reduce runoff. The states in the bay's watershed are Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia as well as the District of Columbia. The Susquehanna River is the bay's largest tributary.

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## WASHINGTON, D.C.

### **WASHINGTON POST**

Most federal employees will be excused from work on Wednesday Most federal employees will receive an excused day off from work when the government closes on Wednesday for the national day of mourning for former president George H.W. Bush, the central federal personnel agency said Sunday. "As the Nation mourns the loss of President George H. W. Bush, President Trump has taken official action to allow Federal employees to join their fellow citizens in remembering our forty-first President of the United States," said guidance from the Office of Personnel Management. "The President has issued an Executive order to close Federal offices and excuse all Federal employees from duty for the scheduled workday on Wednesday, December 5, 2018, except those who, in the judgment of the head of the agency, cannot be excused for reasons of national security, defense, or other essential public business. "For pay and leave purposes, the day is to be treated as a holiday. "Most employees who are excused from duty as a result of the President's Executive order will receive the basic pay they would have received if no Executive order had been issued. An employee who was previously scheduled to take annual leave on December 5, 2018, will not be charged annual leave (or any other form of paid leave, compensatory time off, or credit hours) for that day," it said...

The Energy 202 Blog: How George H.W. Bush helped turn acid rain into a problem of yesteryear When William K. Reilly met with George H.W. Bush after his 1988 presidential election win, he had a condition for taking the job as Bush's chief environmental law enforcer. Reilly wanted an assurance from the president-elect that he would update the nation's main air pollution statute. Last amended in 1977, many in the late 1980s saw the law as woefully outdated in addressing the headline environmental crisis of the day. Acid rain, the product of sulfur oxides and other pollutants pumped into the air by cars and coal-fired power plants, was sterilizing lakes and streams from the Rockies to the Adirondacks. "I'll do it," Bush said according to Reilly, who from 1989 to 1993 served as his administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. "On the environment, he promised to be the 'environmental president,' " Reilly told The Post in an interview. "He made any number of significant both gestures and beyond gestures — decisions — the first thing which was he proposed the new Clean Air Act."

How the federal government became responsible for disaster relief In the aftermath of Friday's 7.0-magnitude earthquake that struck near Anchorage, CNN relayed a presidential tweet: "Trump tweets to Alaska: 'Federal Government will spare no expense.' " Future historians will have to assess where this disaster fits in the broader story of the Trump presidency and its management of catastrophes such as Hurricanes Maria and Harvey or the California wildfires. But Trump's tweet, and the assumption that the federal government will open its checkbook for the state, recalls another Alaska earthquake that decisively altered the trajectory of American disaster politics, one that permanently increased national responsibility for disaster recovery. The 9.2-magnitude seismic shocker known as the "Great Alaska Earthquake" that struck on the evening of March 27, 1964, was the largest recorded earthquake in U.S. history. More powerful than the San Francisco Earthquake of 1906, it crumpled roads and toppled buildings in Anchorage, sent shock waves and a tsunami south toward the U.S. Pacific coast, and caused the Space Needle in Seattle, Wash., to sway ominously. According to a recent U.S. Geological Survey reexamination, it was powerful enough that it "caused the entire Earth to ring like a bell."...

Building in Crystal City that houses some Defense Department offices is evacuated The evacuation followed the report of a bomb threat at the building at 26th and South Clark streets...

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## DELAWARE

### **DELAWARE CAPE GAZETTE**

DelDOT dealing with unprecedented rain, lots of projects Not much more than a year has passed since Delaware's Department of Transportation raised the northbound lanes of Route 1 just north of Indian River Inlet bridge by about eight inches. Chronic flooding on those oceanside lanes necessitated the work. Three or four highway closures per year were too disruptive to have done nothing. "It wasn't a big project and it wasn't an expensive project," said DelDOT Secretary Jennifer Cohan during a visit to the Cape Gazette this week. "And we know it's only a temporary fix. But so far it has worked. We haven't had to close that highway once since the work was completed. And this has been a record-breaking year for rainfall." She said this is the wettest construction season DelDOT has experienced in 125 years...

Letter: Conaway is right-Industrial parks are needed I want to second Joe Conaway's suggestions as to what is needed to boost economic development in Sussex County. Unfortunately, it can take two years to get all the approvals needed to even start construction of a building for new, or expanding industry. Companies don't have that kind of time to wait. Creating an industrial park with zoning and traffic concerns already answered and utilities already in place dramatically shortens start up times. This worked at the Sussex County Industrial Park at the airport, and in similar industrial parks in Milford, Dover and Middletown. While an upfront expenditure from county government is needed, the cost will be recovered by the sale of building lots, and the increased tax base. As Mr. Conaway stated, this is an excellent investment of surplus county funds. It is likely other funds could be obtained from the USDA Rural Development Fund, the state Prosperity Partnership, and possibly by utility companies seeking future business. The alternative is to continue relying on the growth of low-wage jobs, and the continued export of our children, and grandchildren, to other more prosperous areas.

Letter: Time to act now on global warming At last, in response to the terrible predictions about global warming and sea-level rise, comes a positive proposal by congressional leaders to curb our pollution. House Bill 7173, titled Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, would impose a fee on fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas, and pass on the revenues to us, the taxpayers! We should all applaud their work and call our senators, Carper and Coons, as well as Congresswoman Blunt-Rochester and ask their support. The number is 202-224-3121. Global warming and sea-level rise are with us, and we must act now.

### **DELAWARE PUBLIC MEDIA (NPR)**

New hydrogen plant coming to Delaware City Refinery PBF Energy and its partner The Linde Group recently broke ground on a hydrogen plant at the Delaware City Refinery. The plant will help the refinery convert more crude oil products into higher quality fuels. The plant, a Methane Steam Reforming facility, will produce hydrogen from natural gas. The refinery will use that hydrogen to remove sulfur from the crude products left behind in other refining processes. The Linde Group, which has an industrial gases plant in Claymont, will build, own and operate the new hydrogen plant at the Delaware City Refinery. "The hydrogen is going to be used to convert some of their heavy feedstock that they process at the refinery to very clean fuels," said Dr. Raghu Menon, Vice President of Onsite Investment Projects for Linde Americas. Menon says the more than \$100-million project will create seven permanent, high-skilled jobs with Linde. He says Linde Gas owns and operates over sixty steam reforming-based hydrogen plants worldwide... Tom Nimbley, PBF Energy Chairman and CEO, said in a statement that the new hydrogen plant will expand the Delaware City Refinery's ability to produce marine fuels that meet this standard. Linde's Menon says the 25 million standard cubic feet per day hydrogen plant at the Delaware City Refinery will have Selective-Catalytic Reduction technology to reduce emissions. The Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control's Division of Air Quality permitted the project for a reformer, a cooling tower, and a flare. The permits set emissions limitations for nitrogen oxide, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, PM10, PM2.5, sulfuric acid, volatile organic compounds, ammonia and carbon dioxide equivalent. A spokesperson for the state environmental agency says DNREC's monitoring at the Delaware City Refinery is not expected to change once the hydrogen plant is operational. According to DNREC, the Delaware City monitoring station measures sulfur dioxide and PM2.5. PM2.5 is small particulate matter that is unhealthy to inhale.

Environmentalists react to authorization of seismic testing off Delaware's coast Environmental groups are decrying the Trump administration's decision allowing seismic testing off the First State's coast. The Trump administration is moving forward with expansion of offshore drilling in U.S. waters, despite opposition from states and activists. It issued a final decision late last week authorizing permits for five companies to use seismic air guns to search for oil and gas deposits in the Atlantic Ocean from Delaware to Florida. Suzanne Thurman with the Marine Education, Research and Rehabilitation Institute (MERR), says blasts happening every 10 seconds, 24 hours a day for weeks or months can cause injuries or death in plankton, fish, dolphins and whales. "Brain hemorrhaging, organ hemorrhaging, eardrum rupturing and loss of hearing for them means loss of life because they're sound reliant," she said. "It will cause mothers and calves to be separated, displacement, prey sources impacted." So for the marine animals, what will happen to them is often fatal and at the very least is very harmful." The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management found the air guns have the potential to disrupt behavior patterns and cause ear injuries, but no deaths are expected. Through a spokesman, Gov. John Carney said he opposes the decision to allow the seismic surveys, especially as a first step to offshore drilling. "This is a idea for our environment and our economy, especially if this is a precursor to drilling to drilling for oil and gas in the Atlantic," he said. "We have been clear with the Trump administration about the dangers of oil and gas drilling off Delaware's coast or elsewhere in the Atlantic." Carney signed legislation in September banning offshore drilling in state waters and protecting Delaware's environmental rights. Sen. Stephanie Hansen says the state may be able to use the new protections to try to stop the administration from pursuing offshore drilling off Delaware's coast.

Delaware growers to conclude Christmas tree sale study this year A three-year study on Christmas tree sales in the First State is wrapping up at the end of this holiday season. The Delaware Christmas Tree Growers' Association received \$17,042 through the USDA Farm Bill in 2016. The funds were intended to enhance the competitiveness of Delaware's specialty crop industry, and state officials decided to use them to examine tree sales. Rosanne Conlon owns Turning Point Farms in Hartly and is the Tree Growers' Association co-president. She says she has been tracking how various advertising venues correlate with the association's overall tree sales. "We need the data from 2018 and then we will have three years that we will track sales and percentages of change," said Conlon. "So we will have some indicator of where our market is and where it is heading." Conlon says tree sales on her farm have gone up over the course of the study. She says this season got off to a quick start and her inventory is now depleted. "I have about 10-12 acres of trees and I'm just amazed that they continue to come in and find a tree because I've seen a lot of trees march out of here already," she said.

## **CHARLESTON GAZETTE-MAIL**

Freedom Industries site to be auctioned next week The former site of the company that spilled chemicals into the Elk River in 2014, contaminating the water for about 300,000 West Virginians, is going up for auction. On Dec. 13 at noon, anyone interested in purchasing the former Freedom Industries site can place a bid. A website listing describes the property for sale as a building, plus a “commercial property on 4.9 +/- acres on the Elk River.”...

## **WEST VIRGINIA PUBLIC BROADCASTING**

WVU Conference Shines Light on Barriers to Climate Change Communication Teachers, scientists, longtime climate change communicators and others gathered Saturday at West Virginia University’s College of Law to talk about one of the greatest threats facing the world: climate change. The theme of the 7th National Energy Conference centered on climate change communication. Speakers and attendees acknowledged that invoking the topic can be especially challenging in West Virginia because of the state’s history with coal. Tom Rodd, board member of the nonprofit conservation group Friends of Blackwater and one the organizers of the WVU conference, said it’s important to recognize that West Virginia’s coal helped power the country for decades, but it has also played a large role in producing carbon pollution. He said that’s why climate change dialogue is even more essential here. “Our future is not going to be with those kind of energy solutions,” Rodd said. “We need technological fixes so we can create energy without greenhouse gas emissions, and so it’s very important for West Virginia to be a leader.” The conference’s keynote speaker was Emily Calandrelli, producer and host of FOX’s Xploration Outer Space. The Morgantown native said she relies on empathy when talking about climate change and tries to meet people where they are. “Understanding the problems and the struggles of people of West Virginia have helped me frame the concept of climate change and how we fight we fight climate change in a different way,” she said. Dylan Selterman, a lecturer with the University of Maryland’s psychology department, shared some insights from his field that may move the needle on communicating climate change, especially to those who may express doubts...

## **WEST VIRGINIA METRO NEWS**

Federal judge dismisses additional lawsuits in connection with warehouse fire CHARLESTON, W.Va. — A federal judge has dismissed additional lawsuits filed against the owners and customers of a large industrial warehouse in Parkersburg where a major fire happened just more than a year ago. U.S. District Judge Thomas Johnston ruled against the plaintiffs in the IEI warehouse fire. He made a similar ruling against a number of other plaintiffs in August. Charleston attorney Mike Hissam, who represents the warehouse owners, said the claims are meritless. “This was smoke from a warehouse fire and there just isn’t evidence that people were harmed in the way that’s set forth in these complaints and the judge is demanding that there be some actual, credible allegation as to how people were affected by these fires,” Hissam said. Judge Johnston dismissed most of the claims against SABIC Innovative Plastics, Kuraray America Inc. and a group of Sirnaik-affiliated companies. He did give the plaintiffs the opportunity to refile a new complaint by January. A few of the claims are still alive in state court. Harrison County Circuit Judge Thomas Baddell has been appointed to hear the cases. Hissam said those are a long way from trial...

## **HAGERSTOWN HERALD MAIL**

Approval closer for Eastern Panhandle bus transit center MARTINSBURG, W.Va. — The Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority is edging closer to federal approval to build a new transit operations center. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has asked for more information related to National Environmental Policy Act regulations that apply to the transit agency’s plan to acquire property in Martinsburg for the facility, Elaine Bartoldson, the Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority’s deputy director, said Friday. The city of Martinsburg helped EPTA pay for the environmental study using brownfields grant funds, limiting the transit agency’s cost to \$2,000, EPTA Director Doug Pixler told transit board members in September. Even with additional information the FTA requested, Bartoldson anticipates getting final government approval for acquiring the preferred property site in the city next year. When \$4.5 million in federal funding was announced in April, transit officials hoped to break ground on the project in 2020 after acquiring property. “We have to make sure that the property meets all of the federal guidelines,” Bartoldson said Friday. The Eastern Panhandle

Regional Planning & Development Council is helping the transit agency provide requested information to the FTA, Bartoldson said. While FTA approval is pending, Bartoldson said, the transit agency is applying for additional federal funds for the project. It is expected to include facilities for a transfer center for passengers, bus storage, maintenance and administrative offices. Pixler had said transit officials initially applied for \$14 million. Bartoldson said Friday they now hope to get the remaining funds that were not awarded. The transfer center and the administrative offices are expected to be the first part of the project since the EPTA still can use maintenance facilities off Novak Drive, Bartoldson said. EPTA's transfer center is currently based at the Martinsburg train station off East Martin Street. Recently adopted new bus transit routes for EPTA were designed with the new facility in mind, Bartoldson said. Along new bus routes, the EPTA has worked with community leaders to install bus stop shelters for riders, including locations outside the Martinsburg Public Library along South Queen Street and in front of the Berkeley County Sheriff's Department on South Raleigh Street near the county's judicial center. The South Raleigh Street bus shelter also would support the county's Day Report Center should it be moved to the former CVS pharmacy building next to the sheriff's department, Berkeley County Council members said Thursday.

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## MARYLAND

### **BALTIMORE SUN**

Everything you need to know about possible government shutdown this month Here we go again. The federal government is at the precipice of another shutdown, this time a partial one, if Congress can't reach an agreement soon on seven outstanding appropriations bills. The deadline to pass those bills is Friday at midnight, but the funeral for former President George H.W. Bush complicated that schedule, so the lawmakers have agreed to push the deadline back two weeks, until Dec. 21. Let's take a quick look at all that is at stake this month. - - - **Why would it be a partial shutdown?** Lawmakers were quite proud of themselves this year when they were able to pass brand new spending bills for important areas such as defense, education, veterans affairs and energy, so all of those related agencies and programs are securely funded for fiscal 2019. But Congress couldn't finish seven other appropriations bills before the midterms, so lawmakers packaged them together in a short-term continuing resolution that they set to expire Friday. Those include funding for the departments of Homeland Security, Commerce, State, Justice and Interior, among others. With limited time before the end of the year, all the bills will need to pass as one big omnibus, which means any sticking point could upend the whole thing. Which brings us to . . . **What's the major sticking point?** Simply, the biggest issue is funding for President Donald Trump's border wall. It's his signature issue, one that he's been promising since the early days of his campaign (back when he said Mexico would pay for it), and now he says he'd allow the government to shut down if the spending package doesn't include \$5 billion for his wall. The Democrats have conceded to \$1.67 billion for enhanced border security, but Trump isn't satisfied. Meanwhile, some Democrats wonder why a deal was made in the first place, especially one that didn't include protections for "dreamers," the undocumented immigrants brought to the United States as children....

### **CHESAPEAKE BAY JOURNAL**

Multifunction stream buffers offer food for thought for PA farms Don English strode along the mowed path through his streamside buffer on Happy Hollow Farm in southcentral Pennsylvania with the confidence of an experienced tour guide. The tiny headwater stream of Deer Creek gurgled by, hardly visible in the tangled sprays of goldenrod and deep purple bergamot growing tall in the sunny spaces between larger trees and shrubs. It was August, and monarch butterflies and bees were still flitting about. The blueberries were gone, and the elderberries were not quite ripe. Stopping, he leaned on stacked beehives, pointing out the native trees and shrubs — about 80 species in all — and announced that the bees had collected enough pollen from the explosion of flowers here to generate 70 pounds of honey so far this year. The 4-acre streamside buffer designed by his landscape architect wife, Ann, filters pollutants from stormwater and provides wildlife habitat. It also generates nuts, berries, honey and syrup — a bounty that could also deliver a financial return. It truly is multitasking. “When I designed [the buffer], I had never heard the term ‘forest farming’ before,” Ann said. “When I did, I said, ‘hey that’s what we’re doing.’ ”...

## **CHESAPEAKE BAY MAGAZINE**

Norfolk's Floating Trash Filter Brings in Big Haul It's only been two months, and the trash-collecting Seabin installed at Nauticus is already making a big difference for the Elizabeth River. As *Bay Bulletin* reported in October, the Seabin was placed in the water on the Nauticus science center's campus in downtown Norfolk. Since early that month, the device, which snags marine debris and filters water out, has collected more than 138 pounds of junk, says Susie Hill, Education Specialist and Special Programs Manager at the maritime science center. "It collects anything and everything," Hill says of the Seabin, which runs 24 hours a day and filters approximately seven gallons per hour. During one day alone this fall, it was able to collect 21 pounds of debris. So far, the device has captured straws, coffee cups, construction debris, weeds, algae, and lots of plastic. Thanks to the composition of the Seabin's mesh net, Hill says it's also able to catch the notorious micro-plastics, tiny pieces of plastic measuring less than five millimeters. The center's education crew and the Nauticus Junior Scientists Club make sure the device is cleaned and monitored regularly. The small workhorse may be joined by other Seabins in the near future; "the intention is to have three of them around Nauticus's campus" in the next two years.

Intracoastal Waterway to Get Federal Funding Boost for Dredging The Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway (AIWW) will get one of its biggest funding increases in recent years, in the federal government's Fiscal Year 2019. The recently-released AIWW maintenance budget is set at \$23.944 million. It will allow the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to do critical dredging projects needed to keep the waterway navigable for commercial and recreational boat traffic... The section of the Intracoastal Waterway where the money is going extends more than 1,100 miles from Norfolk, Virginia to the Florida Keys. It's designated as "Marine Highway M-95" by the U.S. Department of Transportation. It's the primary route for recreational boaters heading south and north. Jody Argo Schroath, editor of the ICW Planning Guide and ICW Mile by Mile Guide (published by *Chesapeake Bay Magazine*), says the increased funds are welcome news in certain neglected areas of the waterway. "The happy news is especially happy in South Carolina, where the area south of Jeremy Creek and the area around Isle of Palms has been getting worse, and in Georgia, which has notoriously bad areas such as Hell Gate, Little Mud River, and Jekyll Creek." But, Schroath notes, Nature may have her own ideas about these shallow spots. Strong currents, like those at inlets, push tons of silt across the channel every year. If a hurricane impacts the ICW, even more silt can be dragged into the waterway's manmade cuts. So, dredging may last only a couple of years at best in some places.

NOAA Approves Seismic Blasts off Coast of Md., Va. The federal government has cleared the way for five companies to do seismic surveys in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Maryland and Virginia, as a first step to possible offshore drilling for gas and oil. National Marine Fisheries Service, part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, gave final authorization, under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, to "incidentally, but not intentionally, harass marine mammals to companies proposing to conduct geophysical surveys in support of hydrocarbon exploration in the Atlantic Ocean." That means NOAA Fisheries will allow seismic blasts even though they may unintentionally disturb marine mammals. The companies will be required to monitor acoustics, and take action to reduce the impact on animals. The required actions include vessels listening and watching for marine life, especially protected species. Companies must increase the seismic activity gradually "to alert animals in the area and reduce potential for exposure to intense noise." And when certain sensitive species are nearby, they must stop blasting. The geophysical surveys use airgun arrays to explore for hydrocarbons. A 2017 Presidential Executive Order encourages energy exploration like this. The NOAA Fisheries decision to allow blasting on the Atlantic Coast was met with outrage from conservation groups like the Chesapeake Bay Foundation...

Caution Boaters: Conowingo Dam Spill Gates Open Indefinitely On the heels of the rainiest November in history, a dozen flood gates at the Conowingo Dam are open "until further notice." And the Coast Guard is warning boaters to use caution. Starting on November 28, Conowingo Dam began operating under "spill conditions," opening 12 flood crest gates. The Coast Guard issued an advisory to mariners about possible debris in the Susquehanna River and upper Bay in the near future: ...

## **HAGERSTOWN HERALD MAIL**

Approval closer for Eastern Panhandle bus transit center MARTINSBURG, W.Va. — The Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority is edging closer to federal approval to build a new transit operations center. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has asked for more information related to National Environmental Policy Act regulations that apply

to the transit agency's plan to acquire property in Martinsburg for the facility, Elaine Bartoldson, the Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority's deputy director, said Friday. The city of Martinsburg helped EPTA pay for the environmental study using brownfields grant funds, limiting the transit agency's cost to \$2,000, EPTA Director Doug Pixler told transit board members in September. Even with additional information the FTA requested, Bartoldson anticipates getting final government approval for acquiring the preferred property site in the city next year. When \$4.5 million in federal funding was announced in April, transit officials hoped to break ground on the project in 2020 after acquiring property. "We have to make sure that the property meets all of the federal guidelines," Bartoldson said Friday. The Eastern Panhandle Regional Planning & Development Council is helping the transit agency provide requested information to the FTA, Bartoldson said. While FTA approval is pending, Bartoldson said, the transit agency is applying for additional federal funds for the project. It is expected to include facilities for a transfer center for passengers, bus storage, maintenance and administrative offices. Pixler had said transit officials initially applied for \$14 million. Bartoldson said Friday they now hope to get the remaining funds that were not awarded. The transfer center and the administrative offices are expected to be the first part of the project since the EPTA still can use maintenance facilities off Novak Drive, Bartoldson said. EPTA's transfer center is currently based at the Martinsburg train station off East Martin Street. Recently adopted new bus transit routes for EPTA were designed with the new facility in mind, Bartoldson said. Along new bus routes, the EPTA has worked with community leaders to install bus stop shelters for riders, including locations outside the Martinsburg Public Library along South Queen Street and in front of the Berkeley County Sheriff's Department on South Raleigh Street near the county's judicial center. The South Raleigh Street bus shelter also would support the county's Day Report Center should it be moved to the former CVS pharmacy building next to the sheriff's department, Berkeley County Council members said Thursday.

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## VIRGINIA

### **NEWPORT NEWS DAILY PRESS**

Virginia conservationists blast approval of seismic testing for oil, gas in Atlantic Virginia conservationists are blasting the Trump administration's decision to reverse course and approve seismic air gun surveys along the Atlantic coast to search for buried oil and gas reserves. The groups cite widespread public opposition to seismic blasting and offshore drilling, as well as the harm posed to marine life and coastal economies that rely on healthy waters and wetlands. "This action flies in the face of massive opposition to offshore drilling and exploration from over 90 percent of coastal municipalities in the proposed blast zone," said Diane Hoskins, campaign director at the D.C.-based advocacy group Oceana. "President (Donald) Trump is essentially giving these companies permission to harass, harm and possibly even kill marine life." "Offshore drilling in our region would pose far too many risks to the health of coastal waters and the Chesapeake Bay, fishing, aquaculture, tourism and all jobs that depend on clean water," said Lisa Feldt, vice president for environmental protection and restoration at the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. "We need to run away from offshore drilling, not move towards it." Michael Town, executive director of the Virginia League of Conservation Voters, said his members "condemn the Trump administration's tone-deaf push forward in the search for oil we don't need." And at the Southern Environmental Law Center, headquartered in Charlottesville, senior attorney Catherine Wannamaker said "communities up and down the coast have made clear they do not support seismic blasting in the Atlantic, and they will continue to fight the Trump administration turning its back on them."...

### **WTKR-TV 3 HAMPTON ROADS**

Chesapeake Bay Foundation receives grant for Lynnhaven River oyster restoration HAMPTON ROADS, Va. — The Chesapeake Bay Foundation and Lynnhaven River NOW are receiving \$200,000 grants from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. According to a release from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the grants will be used to build 5.25 acres of new Lynnhaven River oyster reef by 2020 and stock it with oysters. "We're thrilled to get this major boost for oyster restoration in Virginia Beach, which helps keep the Lynnhaven River on track to becoming the next Virginia tributary to be fully restored for oyster habitat," said Jackie Shannon, Chesapeake Bay Foundation Virginia Oyster Restoration Manager. "Federal support like this has been a crucial part of making progress on the Chesapeake Bay

Agreement goal of restoring 10 Bay tributaries for oyster habitat. It also supports the Chesapeake Oyster Alliance target of adding 10 billion new oysters to the Bay by 2025. Thank you to NFWF for its longstanding support for oyster restoration. The comeback of Lynnhaven River oysters is happening thanks to many federal, state, and local partners. We're looking forward to continuing our work together here on the Lynnhaven and getting the job done." For more on the work of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and its oyster restoration initiatives, [click here](#).

## **AUGUSTA FREE PRESS**

Virginia to receive \$18 million in grants to support clean water The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the EPA announced more than \$13.1 million in grants to support the restoration and conservation of the Chesapeake Bay watershed in six states and the District of Columbia. The 49 grants will generate more than \$21.9 million in matching contributions for a total conservation impact of nearly \$35 million. The 19 projects in Virginia will leverage matching funds of \$11,311,235 for a total of \$18,048,992 to support water quality improvements. The grants were awarded through the Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund (CBSF), a partnership between NFWF and the EPA's Innovative Nutrient and Sediment Reduction Grants Program (INSR Program) and Small Watershed Grants Program (SWG Program). Additional support is provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Altria Group Restoring America's Resources partnership and CSX. Grant recipients were announced at the Cork Factory Hotel in downtown Lancaster in conjunction with the NFWF-hosted, biennial Chesapeake Ag Forum, a conference that brings together the best practitioners and partners advancing agricultural conservation practices across the Chesapeake Bay watershed... "EPA is pleased to support innovative and sustainable approaches to improving the health of our rivers and streams," said EPA Regional Administrator Cosmo Servidio. "These investments in partnerships with states and local organizations encourage community stewardship of resources that will help preserve and enhance healthy waterways throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed." The INSR Program awarded more than \$7.3 million to eight projects, with recipients providing more than \$10.4 million in match. The program provides grants to accelerate the implementation of water quality improvements specifically through the collaborative and coordinated efforts of sustainable, regional-scale partnerships with a shared focus on water quality restoration and protection in local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay...

## **COALFIELD PROGRESS**

Report: Virginia air pollution on the decline The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality says ground-level ozone monitoring results show that Virginia's air quality continues to improve. Monitoring for ground-level ozone runs from May 1 through Oct. 31. Data is collected from DEQ's 21 ozone monitoring stations. Results are reported to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In 2018, Virginia saw only six days when air quality exceeded levels for ground-level ozone ("Code Orange" days), according to a Nov. 28 press release. Virginia has been trending in a positive direction, with only four Code Orange days in 2017. By comparison, Virginia reported more than 100 excessive ozone days in both 1993 and 1998. Also, levels of fine particulate pollution have decreased by more than 40 percent and nitrogen oxide and sulfur dioxide levels have dropped significantly. Air pollution in Virginia has decreased by more than 50 percent over the last 25 years, said DEQ Air and Renewable Energy Division Director Michael Dowd. "Through our permitting and regulatory programs we are managing a more complex system of solutions to achieve the best air quality in decades. DEQ is focused on encouraging development in the solar field and in deploying electric vehicle technology so these excellent trends in air quality will continue." In the upper atmosphere, ozone filters harmful UV rays, but at ground level, it is considered a pollutant. Ozone forms when pollutants emitted by cars and other sources react on hot, sunny days. Ground-level ozone can cause a variety of health problems, as well as damage to plants and building materials. Chemicals that form ozone — nitrogen oxides and hydrocarbons (also called volatile organic compounds or VOCs) — are generated by sources such as motor vehicle exhaust, power plants, industrial emissions and solvents. Ozone can travel hundreds of miles from its original source, so that even rural areas with few pollutants can occasionally experience high-ozone levels...

## **CBS 19 CHARLOTTESVILLE**

Report finds improving air quality across Virginia **RICHMOND, Va. (CBS19 NEWS)** -- Virginia's air quality is continuing to improve. The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality recently released its initial ozone monitoring results for 2018, which covers the months between May and October. According to a release, the levels of fine particulate pollution have gone down by more than 40 percent and the levels of nitrogen dioxide and sulfur dioxide have also dropped

significantly. This year, Virginia has seen only six days when air quality exceeded levels for ground-level ozone, which are also called Code Orange days. The levels are color-coded from yellow to maroon according to the severity of the levels, indicating unhealthy air quality for sensitive groups like the elderly and people with asthma. Back in 1993 and 1998, Virginia reporters more than 100 Code Orange days, but by 2017, there were only four. "As a result of emission reductions associated with a variety of pollution control programs and positive changes in people's behavior such as carpooling, air pollution in Virginia has decreased by more than 50 percent over the last 25 years," said DEQ Air and Renewable Energy Division Director Michael Dowd. "Through our permitting and regulatory programs, we are managing a more complex system of solutions to achieve the best air quality in decades. DEQ is focused on encouraging development in the solar field and in deploying electric vehicle technology so these excellent trends in air quality will continue."...

## **FREDERICKSBURG FREE LANCE STAR**

As public hearing looms, questions remain about Spotsylvania solar farm proposal A proposed 500-megawatt power facility that would pepper a 10-square-mile rural area in western Spotsylvania County with 1.8 million solar panels is the largest such proposal in the country. The proposed solar facility also is a big deal for the county and its residents. Since the facility was proposed in January, it has consumed more and more time of state and county officials, residents and representatives of Utah-based Sustainable Energy, which filed for the special-use permit to build the solar farm. In the intervening months, nearby residents have been asking questions and raising concerns about the project, all of which will begin to come to a head Wednesday at a public hearing before the Planning Commission. Actually, the proposal is so complex two public hearings had to be scheduled. Wednesday's hearing will focus on the largest of three special-use proposals on the site, a 5,200-acre tract. A second hearing on Dec. 19 will cover the other two permits. Planning Director Wanda Parrish told the Board of Supervisors during a work session last week that the proposal is complex and evolving. "This project has been very public," she said. But, she added: "This is the beginning of the public process." The proposal is the largest special-use permit the county has ever handled, Director of Utilities Ben Loveday told the supervisors during the work session. He said the permit for BJ's Warehouse was previously the biggest, with 26 requirements...

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# MISCELLANEOUS

## **GOVERNMENT EXECUTIVE**

Congress Set to Pass Two-Week Stopgap Measure This Week to Avoid Partial Shutdown Federal agencies appear likely to receive stopgap funding at the end of the week, with lawmakers and the White House signaling they need more time to avoid a partial government shutdown. Negotiations over full year funding for fiscal 2019 were stalled by the death of President George H.W. Bush, whose casket will be held at the Capitol from Monday evening until his funeral on Wednesday. Lawmakers agreed to a two-week continuing resolution to expire Dec. 21, according to multiple aides, with the House set to approve the measure this week by unanimous consent. Trump, who had taken a hard line over the spending to demand it include \$5 billion for his proposed wall along the U.S.-Mexico border, said over the weekend he would likely sign a stopgap bill. "If [lawmakers] come—which they have—to talk about an extension because of President Bush's passing, I would absolutely consider it and probably give it," Trump said while traveling on Air Force One...

Most TSP Funds Rebounded in November Most of the portfolios in the federal government's 401(k)-style retirement savings program rebounded last month from October's nearly across-the-board losses. The common stocks of the Thrift Savings Plan's C Fund led the way, gaining 2.04 percent in November. So far in 2018, the fund has increased 5.08 percent. The S Fund, which is made up of small- and mid-size businesses, grew 1.92 percent last month, bringing the fund into the black by 1.61 percent for this year. The fixed income bonds in the F Fund increased 0.62 percent in November, although the fund remained 1.65 percent in the red for 2018. And the G Fund, which is made up of government securities, grew 0.26 percent last month. Since January, the fund has increased 2.65 percent. The only portfolio to lose value in November was the international (I) fund, which fell 0.13 percent. In 2018, the fund has lost 9.04 percent. The lifecycle (L) funds, which shift investments to more stable portfolios as participants get closer to

retirement, all grew last month as well. The L Income Fund, for those who have already started withdrawing money, grew 0.53 percent in November; L 2020, 0.65 percent; L 2030, 0.99 percent; L 2040, 1.12 percent; and L 2050, 1.22 percent...

## **BLOOMBERG ENVIRONMENT**

Clean Air Act Revamp, Climate Part of George H.W. Bush's Legacy George H.W. Bush was the first president to sign the U.S. onto a global climate deal, a modest effort recognizing the threat of climate change, and possibly the last to successfully take on a wholesale revision of the Clean Air Act. His administration at times pushed back against what it viewed as overly costly environmental regulations. But the 41st president—who cut his teeth in Texas' oil industry—left what some admirers see as an impressive legacy of environmental laws. They include the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, which used a then-cutting edge approach of emissions trading to cut air pollutants linked to acid rain; and the Global Change Research Act of 1990, which set up a climate change research program across 13 federal agencies and departments. "We all know that human activities are changing the atmosphere in unexpected and in unprecedented ways," Bush said in a February 1990 speech. Bush died Nov. 30 at age 94. Bush's legislative record also included signing the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, which set up a system for assigning liability for oil spills in the wake of the Exxon Valdez oil spill. He also campaigned in 1988 on a no-net-loss of wetlands platform, though many conservation groups said it fell short of the dramatic action needed to stem environmental damage from encroaching development...

Trump Tariffs Are Making Infrastructure More Expensive If Congress approves a national public-works program next year that Democratic and Republican leaders are proposing, President Donald Trump's trade war could inflate the price tag, costing taxpayers and construction companies many millions of dollars...

Global Warming Risks Push Insurers to Restrict Covering Coal Coal plants may have a harder time getting coverage from European insurers as a growing number of companies have agreed to limit underwriting because of intensifying global-warming concerns. Seven major European insurers including Allianz SE and Assicurazioni Generali SpA have restrictions on underwriting new or existing coal plants, up from three a year ago, according to a report Dec. 2 by environmental groups including 350.org and The Sunrise Project. Insurance companies are in a unique position to influence whether coal-fired electric generators are built. Without insurance, power-plant projects are unlikely to attract financing. The effort to push insurers to divest from coal mirrors an earlier campaign by environmentalists to convince banks to do the same. "The insurance industry is low-hanging fruit," Peter Bosshard, the report's author, said in an interview. "They have some of the best climate scientists and understand the risks."...

## **GREENWIRE**

Energy Policy: Sunrise Movement protests possible Manchin promotion An emerging climate activist group launched another protest today in hopes of persuading Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) to prevent the ascension of West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin to the top Democratic spot on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. The protest, located on the sidewalk outside Schumer's New York City office, represents the latest in the Sunrise Movement's effort to influence lawmakers to do more on climate change ahead of a new Congress with Democrats in charge of the House (*Climatewire*, Dec. 3). While it remains uncertain whether Manchin will have the opportunity to move to the top spot on ENR, the protest represents some of the anxiety environmental groups and their Capitol Hill advocates are feeling about the possibility of a staunch coal supporter leading Democrats on the committee overseeing the electric power sector.

### EPA: New union boss taking over

The head of an EPA employee union is leaving his post. Joe Edgell, president of the National Treasury Employees Union Chapter 280, is stepping down from his position representing EPA employees at the agency's Washington, D.C., headquarters. Edgell will relocate to EPA's Seattle-based Region 10 office to be closer to his aging parents, the union said on its website. "Joe will be sorely missed," the union said. "Over his 11 years of NTEU activism, and especially in his 5 months as President, he has helped many members and strengthened NTEU at EPA. Whether it was his leadership, lawyering, negotiation skills, grievance-handling, communication skills, or fierce defense of NTEU and its members ... Joe gave us 1000%." The NTEU executive board voted for Amer Al-Mudallal to take over as president of the union's EPA chapter. Al-Mudallal, a chemist in the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention, has worked at EPA since 1997. He was president of Chapter 280 from 2012 to 2015, according to the website.

Clean Water Act: How George H.W. Bush (eventually) rescued U.S. wetlands On the presidential campaign trail in 1988, then-Vice President George H.W. Bush made a remarkable promise: His administration would set a national goal of "no net loss of wetlands." Bush's pledge came on Labor Day weekend, just after he'd cast a line into Lake Erie and before a sweeping speech on environmental policy that detailed how the nation was losing wetlands at a rate of a half-million acres per year. "Much of the loss comes from inevitable pressure for development, and many of our wetlands are on private property, but I believe we must act," Bush said. "We must bring the private and public sectors together at the local and state levels to find a way to conserve wetlands." It was an exciting promise for EPA officials who were working to fully implement the 1972 Clean Water Act. While Bush — who would be elected in a landslide that fall over Massachusetts Democratic Gov. Michael Dukakis — and his administration eventually stumbled over the "no net loss" pledge and drew the wrath of environmentalists, the promise didn't go away. Fifteen years after Bush's wetlands vow, "no net loss" finally got regulatory teeth from EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers in the administration of his son George W. Bush...

EPA: 'It's pretty hard to say no to a president' Bill Reilly didn't want to lead George H.W. Bush's EPA. Two former Republican EPA bosses — Bill Ruckelshaus and Russell Train — had been floating Reilly's name for the job when then-Vice President Bush was campaigning to succeed President Reagan. Train called Reilly, an environmentalist who headed the World Wildlife Fund, to ask him what he'd do if offered the job. "I said I'd turn it down," Reilly recalled. Train asked why. "I said, 'Well, we've both seen Bush's performance under the Reagan administration, where he headed a major deregulation task force, and I just don't have enough confidence that he'll make good on some of the promises you're making.'" Train and Ruckelshaus told Reilly not to make up his mind so quickly. Train told him: "It's pretty hard to say no to a president." Ruckelshaus advised: "Just make me a promise that if you get the invitation to meet with the president, for heaven's sakes, see him." Reilly obliged. "I think Ruckelshaus knew that, once in front of him, I wasn't going to say no." He took the job, serving as Bush's only Senate-confirmed EPA chief from February 1989 until the Clinton administration took over in 1993...

Supreme Court: Justices ask feds to weigh in on groundwater debate The Supreme Court wants the Trump administration's views on a critical question about the scope of the Clean Water Act. The high court today invited the solicitor general to weigh in on two closely watched cases involving pollution that moves through groundwater before reaching a surface waterway. The order signals the justices' interest in the issue. The Supreme Court today also rejected a challenge to President Trump's border wall and followed up on a recent Endangered Species Act ruling. The question in the groundwater cases: Do pollutants have to move directly from a point source into a federally regulated body of water to trigger the Clean Water Act? Or, as at least two appeals courts have found, does the environmental law also apply to pollutants that move from a point source into groundwater before reaching a waterway?...

Federal Workforce: Trump closing agencies to honor Bush All federal agencies and departments will be closed Wednesday to mark the death of former President George H.W. Bush during a national day of mourning. President Trump issued an executive order announcing the Dec. 5 closures over the weekend. The 41st president died at his home in Houston late on Friday. He was 94. In a memorandum to heads of executive departments and agencies yesterday, the Office of Personnel Management clarified that the day will be treated for the purpose of pay and leave like a holiday. "As the Nation mourns the loss of President George H. W. Bush, President Trump has taken official action to allow Federal employees to join their fellow citizens in remembering our forty-first President of the United States," stated Margaret Weichert, OPM's acting director, in the memo. Not all federal employees will be guaranteed the day off. Federal agencies can keep certain offices or functions running if they are deemed necessary for "national security, defense, or other public need," according to the executive order...

Climate: Shell to set emissions targets tied to executive pay Royal Dutch Shell PLC's decision to give more details on its emission-reduction plans sheds light on private discussions between the oil major and its shareholders, which led to a change in stance following years of resistance...

**CNN**

Congress, reverse the EPA's assault on our environment and health When the 116th Congress is sworn in, it must immediately reverse course from the Trump administration's two-year assault on environmental and public health

protections. To do so, Congress must strengthen the Environmental Protection Agency, defend scientific integrity and legislate to advance America's investments in air quality, clean water infrastructure and renewable energy. Empowered by Congress and the White House for nearly 50 years, the EPA has set the standards for research and has become the home of world-class scientists, engineers, emergency responders, vehicle testing experts and more. A qualified, knowledgeable staff -- coupled with thoughtful enforcement -- has led to extensive air and water quality improvements. Yet President Donald Trump, Acting EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler and his predecessor Scott Pruitt have reversed the agency's progress through austere budget cuts, forced retirements, hostile workplaces, hiring freezes and office closures. In fact, Wheeler is preparing to reorganize the EPA by reshaping regional offices without the consent of Congress. The agency's upcoming restructuring of its regional offices appears designed to overhaul existing enforcement policies and chains of command, likely bolstering political leadership's ability to push reduced regional enforcement and more lenient compliance. If Wheeler succeeds, he'll be better able to tamp down enforcement of public health and environmental rules that protect Americans -- wasting taxpayers' money and threatening their health. Wheeler has dismissed those claims, saying the restructuring will bolster coordination with headquarters...